Nationalistic German Gymnastic Movements and Modern Sports: Culture Between Identity and Habitus

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Dieter Reicher *

Abstract: *»Die nationalistische deutsche Turnerbewegung und ihr Verhältnis zum modernen Sport. Kultur als Idee und Praxis zwischen Identität und Habitus«*. The idea of habitus refers to modes of thinking and feeling that are more unaware and spontaneous. This includes unacknowledged and unreflected we-feelings towards political entities like nations. In contrast, national identity politics differs from habitus-types of we-feelings. Identity politics stresses reflection and deliberate boundary-drawing. In this sense, the article suggests to distinguish habitus from "identity." Thus, there will be the suggestion to differ modes of nationalism, too: culturally "filled" nationalism and culturally "empty" nationalism. According to the first mode, "culture" is regarded a central issue of identity politics. According to "empty" nationalism, the ideal of being "better" or more "successful" than others gains importance. These theoretical considerations will be discussed against the background of the empirical case study focusing on nationalistic gymnastic movements in Germany and in Austria. This paper stresses the questions of how these nationalistic movements had coped with the growing popularity of modern sports in the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century and how their nationalism is related to the process of state-formation in Germany and Austria. This paper also tries to develop a clear understanding of the differences between the kind of nationalism represented by these gymnastic associations and the type of nationalism that can be observed in the context of modern sport-events.

Keywords: Nationalism, habitus, identity, culture, sports, gymnastics, Germany, Austria.

1. Introduction

This paper deals with conceptual problems through the study of nations and nationalism. A first problem relates to the question of the interplay between deep-rooted emotions of belonging and open discourses and narratives about the nation. This problem raises questions about the relationship between habi-

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tus and identity politics. In the usage of this paper, the former concept refers to aspects of human consciousness which are least consciously reflected on and the latter to those which are more reflected on. Elias (2018) described such patterns of dynamics between these two areas of consciousness.

A second problem has to do with the role of culture for nationalism. On the one hand, "culture" understood as everything that people subjectively label as such, is a central topic of nationalistic discourses. On the other hand, each example of thinking and feeling in terms of nations is the result of certain objective cultural changes. In pre-modern societies, thinking in terms of nations would have had little to no sense at all. However, these cultural changes need not necessarily be the outcome of conscious reflection.

The term "culture" has been of central importance for all kinds of identity politics in Western societies since the 19th century. For the purpose of this paper, regardless of the emic terminology that is used in any particular field, "culture" will be understood to be the crucial element of modern identity politics in general. "Culture" describes a certain image of the we-group (or a combination of images) related to open discussed meanings, political dogmas (mostly written down), or more or less well-defined we-ideals.

In contrast, people may reflect real cultural traits only partly or not at all. Sometimes, large sections of the cultural traits lie hidden behind the mental curtain of their conscious reflection as part of the habitus. People may also be aware of cultural traits only in a distorted or even mistaken way. "Culture" may be totally an image of fantasy without the slightest relation to the real cultural characteristics of a group. This problem is even deeper because reflection about objective cultural traits (embodied into the habitus) intentionally or unintentionally leads to their transformation. Thus, identity politics transforms culture even if it pretends to preserve it. Some cultural changes arise more or less unnoticed. Others provoke reflection and lead to identity politics. Under certain conditions, like rapid or traumatic changes or a "moral panic," the topic of "culture" even becomes tightly bound to national sentiments. Debates become less "detached" and more emotionally loaded (Elias 2007). It is an open question what types of psycho-social dynamics transform habitus into identity politics. These theoretical problems will be discussed against the background of an empirical case study focusing on the development of gymnastics in Germany and Austria (called "*Turnen*"), and its changing relationship towards the perception of the nation.

In recent years, sport-related topics were discovered to be fruitful matters for nationalism studies. In the eyes of some scholars, sports provide observable evidences of we-feelings and we-images which are related to the idea of the "nation": competition between national sport-teams and athletes, one-sided mass-media coverages, or the behaviour and rituals of the audience and its "effervescence" of emotions of belonging (Bairner 2001; King 2006; Tomlinson and Young 2006; Werron 2010; Mutz 2013). Other studies have focused on

some types of sports as symbols of national identity and "culture" such as cricket in England (Maguire 1999, 177-9; Malcolm 2009) or skiing in Slovenia or Austria (Horak 2003; Kotnik 2007).

This paper will highlight how German gymnasts (German: *Turner*) linked gymnastics with the concept of "culture." In addition, the paper will focus on long-term social and mental dynamics in the context of the process of state-formation. This study will also analyse the confrontation of German gymnastic movements and modern sports. This case is interesting because the nationalism of the gymnasts clashed with a totally different type of nationalism related to the Olympic Games, national football teams, and other competitions in the context of modern sports. The paper will outline the differences between those two types of nationalism. Thus, it will be demonstrated that the meaning of the concept of "nationalism" can be ambivalent and raises questions: Does the use of the term "nationalism" not obscure complex social realities? What does this case tell us about the interplay between deep-rooted emotions and the reflexive discourse about the nation? What is the theoretical tricky relationship between "habitus" and "identity," or identity politics?

2. Sports and Nationalism

Earlier studies indicate two different modes potentially relate sportive activities to national we-images, we-ideals, and we-feelings (Reicher 2011, 2013). Sports can be seen as a symbol of cultural distinction or of gaining international prestige. The distinction into these two modes follows Weber's suggestion to differentiate "power prestige" (*Machtprestige*) from "culture prestige" (*Kulturprestige*) (Weber 1978, 395ff.; 910ff.).

My first point is that "sports" – or similar activities that are labeled with other terms – can be seen as a symbol of certain identity politics. In such cases, sport-related discourses coin narratives about the so-called proper national "culture." The content and topics of these discourses deal with presumed unique qualities. Those types of sport-related narratives include ideals of being culturally different from others. For example, the Alpine sport known as Bavarian curling still has a touch of ethnic or regional exclusivity, whereas curling developed into a modern sport without a clear regional or national connotation. In the Japan of the Meiji-period, sumō was even glorified officially as a national symbol characteristic of Japanese culture (Sanchez Garcia 2019, 113ff.). Today, sumō is still associated with Japan, but it is on the way to developing into a modern sport (with non-Japanese champions).

Such narratives are concerned with the issue of "us" and "them" (Elias 2012). The members of the in-group relate narratives primary only to one another. They address themselves as "we" or as "us" (1st person plural). The out-group is the object of these narratives, so their members are "they" or "them"

in these stories (3rd person plural). The stories will not be told to "them" (intentionally). One can say, this sort of national narrative and feelings of belonging are "filled" with cultural contents (produced inside of socially-organised settings whose members reflect about sameness, uniqueness, the origin of the nation and its future destiny); it is a culturally "filled nationalism."

Most researchers focus solemnly on this type of national identity politics by referring to the concept of "nationalism." For Gellner (1983, 1), nationalism is a political principal or a dogma that says that the borders of the "nation" and the state should be congruent. A "political principal" is something people design intentionally and deliberately. They do this in a social, connected way, for example in political associations. Mostly, a dogma is written down (as a political programme). Another example is Elie Kedourie's (1960) approach. He states that nationalism is just an "idea" (a bad one) made by philosophers and taught at universities. Here, too, nationalism is understood as strongly related to a reflective mode of consciousness. For Hobsbawm (1983), nationalism is an instrument deliberately used by the leading social class in order to infiltrate the consciousness of the suppressed classes. They invent traditions and forge "false consciousness." This approach presupposes that élites have the skills to intentionally control cognition whereas the (unorganised) crowd lacks this ability. Somewhat differently, Anderson (1983) thinks that nationalism is an "imagined community." It is the outcome of the reception of book- and newspaper-literature written in vernacular languages. If something is "imagined," it is a reflexive and not a purely affective type of mental representation. At least Anderson leaves it more open than the other authors whether "imagination" is also related to mental processes with little conscious reflection.

My second point is that sports are always part of the habitus. Seen from the perspective of the athletes, training and repetition lead to processes of automatisation of thinking and body movements. On the part of the audience, spontaneity, excitement, and emotions of pride and shame are related to the sport teams' and the athletes' performances. Sometimes such sport practices are embedded into sets of unreflected emotions of belonging. Certain sport practices are even shared globally. Nevertheless, they provide the ground for particular we-feelings because of shared meanings of status and prestige. Only if others accept symbols as prestigious too, can they acquire meaning and become a source of group-pride (or group-shame).

For example, roller-skating was invented in France as a curiosity on the stage. It developed further in the USA becoming a popular sport. Afterwards it spread all over the world. Roller-skating has never been chosen as a symbol of any national "culture." It is just a practice which diffused into all corners of the world. However, in the form of skater hockey, the sport developed into a contact sport organised by the International Inline-Skater Hockey Federation on the basis of tournaments with national teams. Therefore, this second mode of relating sports to nations is not so much concerned with ideals of being cultur-

ally different. Here, ideals of being "better" or "more successful" than others dominate.

The "we/us" and "they/them" stories acquire a different narrative structure. In the context of established global sports, they rather resemble "we/us" stories and "you/you" stories (2nd person plural). In the context of sharing the same symbols of prestige with others, the out-group is seen rather as a you-group and not as a they-group. We-group and you-group share the same cultural practices and narratives. For example, the members of the national we-group are more proud about their football heroes, and hero stories about the football World Cup are shared all over the world. In the case of football, the issue of a distinct "culture" is less important.

This type of nationalism seems to be "emptied" of culturally distinctive content, we-images and ideals are rather unreflexive and lack articulation. It may be labeled as "empty nationalism." Few researchers have dealt with this second mode of "nationalism." Michael Billig (1995) calls the mostly unnoticed symbols in everyday life, such as flags or TV-weather reports (with the map of the home country), "banal nationalism." Some authors use the concept of "corporate nationalism" (Silk, Andrews, and Cole 2005). They focus on trade-marks as a source of national pride. In a way, trade-marks can only be such a source because members of the we-group know that members of other groups also appreciate the same (this knowledge gives them pride).

These two modes of how people relate sports to nationalism – culturally "filled" and "emptied" – may not be harmonious. Rather, there may be frictions and contradictions. For example, if a certain sports discipline is related to narratives and identity discourses about presumed qualities of national uniqueness ("us"- and "them"-stories), the practices of this sport will not be shared easily with members of other nations or ethnic groups. This type of sport stays localised. It spreads only slowly (or not at all) to other world regions. Members of a national or ethnic we-group may believe that only they themselves are worth enough to play or practise a certain type of sports. In their eyes, the others are not worth competing against. In contrast, in the case of football or other types of modern sports which are globally practised, the idea of cultural uniqueness is commonly not regarded as very important. Anyway, such ideas of exclusion have to be downplayed. Otherwise, competitions between nations would not be possible. Without commonly shared "us"- and "you"-stories, there would be no mutual accepted systems of status symbols and international prestige. Olympic Games, World Championships, or World Cups are only perceived to be important institutions if identity discourses about cultural uniqueness are rare or non-existent. "Success" and gaining international prestige seems to be more important than the idea of a unique cultural identity.

3. The Case Study Part I: The Rise of Nationalistic German Gymnastics (1780s to 1918)

At the end of the 18th and during the 19th century, German middle-class intellectuals glorified the idea of "culture." As Norbert Elias (2000, 13ff.) has stressed, these intellectuals draw an ideologically-grounded distinction between what they called "culture" and "civilization." Literary scholars, philosophers, and other middle-class representatives used this distinction in order to formulate a social critique of the German nobility. In their opinion, "culture" was a symbol of a "deep truth" related to the German "national character." However, they believed the nobility betrayed the "spirit" of the German nation. According to the philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (2006, orig. 1797), mankind is divided into distinct and primordial national "cultures" (*Kulturen*). These national "cultures" are still to be found in the lifestyle, the fairytales, or the folksongs of ordinary people. Therefore, linguists and folklorists like the Brothers Grimm tried to collect testimonies of "Germanness" (*Deutschtum*). According to Herder and later nationalists like Fichte, Arndt, or Jahn, it is necessary to reawake German "culture" and to make sure that all Germans are united in a single state governed by the principles of the nation. For the German middle classes mainly excluded from power, "culture," as a mean of political critique, was the central idea of their utopian vision of a German nation.

The early contours of German nationalism were drawn by philosophers and intellectuals of the Enlightenment and of Romanticism. Their ideas were clearly a product of reflection developed through the form of literature, discussions, and speeches. Outside of these narrow circles, people were less willing to adopt and share the same ideas. For the ordinary people in the countryside, that is, for the majority of the population, the idea of the nation had still no meaning at all.

For the German nationalist thinkers, it is the mother tongue that makes "real" culture. It is embodied for example in the literature of the Weimar classics or the Imperial Court Theater in Vienna (*Burgtheater*). In reality, only a few people were able to read and write in the late 18th century. An even smaller part of the population used High-German as their preferred medium of communication. Also, music was of symbolic importance for the nationalists. They believed in "genuine" German music. They thought to find it in the works of the (national) composers (e.g., Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, etc.) or in folkmusic. They believed that these types of music express the deep soul of the "*Volk*" (people). They also stressed the importance of history as a form of the ideal of "*Bildung*" (the kind of education found in the *Gymnasium*, the academ-

ic secondary school[1]). For those middle-class intellectuals the imitation of French court culture and the use of the French language by the nobility was seen as treason. It was related to "civilisation" (Zivilisation) as a synonym of something foreign, being superficial and not "deep."

Not only literature and art but also gymnastics belonged to the topos of "culture." At the end of the 18th century, the German Johann Christoph Friedrich GutsMuths (1759 to 1839), an educator in the school at Schnepfenthal (Thuringia), invented "*Turnen*" as a pedagogical system fostering "*Leibesübungen*" (physical exercises), actually referring to the ancient Greek model of *gymnastiké*. Under the influence of the Napoleonic wars, "*Turnen*" became strongly associated with patriotism. GutsMuths suggested that gymnastics should be helpful in strengthening Prussian's military abilities (*Wehrfähigkeit*). In *Turnbuch für die Söhne des Vaterlandes* (*Gymnastics book for the sons of the fatherland*), GutsMuths wrote two years after the Congress of Vienna:

> Since very ancient times, the German tribe has settled down in the heart of this part of the world. It is a very dangerous homeland but also a place of honour for those who know how to defend themselves. In this beautiful landscape the oak strikes root. A dangerous place where storms are blowing. But who cares if the oaks stands there with youthful power? […] Freedom and independence has to be protected. (GutsMuths 1817, XIV)

GutsMuths argued that gymnastics is helpful in gaining national freedom and independence: "The defence of freedom and independence of a people is founded on God but also on the physical and intellectual power of a true national character" (GutsMuths 1817, XVI).

The educator Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778 to 1852), called the "father of German gymnastics," was probably the first to relate gymnastics with fierce German nationalism (Jahn and Eiselen 1816). Jahn was interested in defying French occupiers on the battlefield. His gymnast-movement became one of the most prominent organisations promoting early German nationalism. At the Hasenheide in Berlin (the first location dedicated to gymnastics) Jahn founded the secret society "Deutscher Bund." Under the influence of Johann Gottfried Fichte's (1762 to 1814) "Addresses to the German Nation" (Fichte 1808), Jahn and the Deutscher Bund tried to forge an alliance between all parts of society in order to establish an utopian project that would change the political situation dramatically: the foundation of a new German Reich.

Some of the gymnasts also participated in the Lützow Free Corps in the wars against the French. These fighters were not loyal towards the Prussian king or state, or any other German prince. Unlike the regular armies, the Free Corps defined their loyalty towards the idea of a united Germany. These Free

[1] It is important to distinguish the German term *Gymnasium*, which is a type of school, from the use of gymnasium in English which means the sports facility where gymnastics take place.

Corps had a major influence on German romantic nationalists: They fostered the idea of pan-German nationalism with the black-red-gold color scheme on their uniforms. After the Napoleonic Wars, the gymnasts and the student fraternities (*Burschenschaften*) were suppressed under the influence of Metternich's politics. However, events like the festival on the Wartburg (1817), the Hambacher Festival (1832), and the Revolution of 1848 in Vienna and Berlin helped those nationalist movements to strengthen their doctrine and their demands for German unity and democracy.

In this first phase of the German gymnasts' movement, the gymnasts did not relate their sports activities exclusively to the idea of cultural particularity. Gymnastics was also an instrument for defending the fatherland. The utopian aspect of gymnastics was related to the function of the human/male body as a stronghold for the nation. Above all, the gymnasts could not operate openly but were forced to remain more or less underground, the state-authorities being suspicious about their revolutionary potential.

The situation changed after the Revolution of 1848 and the short period of "neo-absolutism" which followed. First, sections of the middle classes and especially the higher bourgeoisie became successful in gaining certain positions of power, mostly in industry, banking, and local administrations. This made the gymnast-movement more respectable. Their ideas were regarded as being important for school education as well as for the training in the army. Second, the Austro-Prussian-War, or *Deutscher Krieg* (1866), and the Franco-Prussian-War (1870-71) produced the "Lesser German Solution" as an outcome. Large parts of the German speaking population were no longer part of a united Germany. In this situation, the gymnasts in the territories of the Habsburg Empire acquired new significance as an irredentist movement longing for a "Greater German Empire," thus provoking the establishment of rival gymnasts' movements among other nationalities. An example is the separatist Czech Sokol movement founded in the 1860s by Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner.

Meanwhile, German gymnasts in the united German Empire changed their position: from outsiders to the established. The paradox of the situation was that one of the gymnasts' goals, German unity, had become reality (at least partly). After 1871, the political purpose of the large gymnastic festivals (*Deutsche Turnfeste*, 1860, 1861) and other events lost its meaning. "*Turnen*" (gymnastics) as a part of school education remained extremely formal and boring. For many pupils, it was an unloved activity and the gymnasts had shifted from being a revolutionary to a conservative movement.

In this context, the once revolutionary concepts of "culture" and "nation" also underwent transformations. No longer did they serve as symbols of political critique. At the same time, people became accustomed to the unified nation-state. This was even more applicable to the younger generations. They had no memory of Metternich's regime and the time before 1848. Above all, in the

period between 1871 and 1914, the idea of the nation and its subsequent habitualisation spread from the narrow circles of middle-class intellectuals to other social groups. In the end, even the ordinary people of the country side felt themselves to be "German." The utopian ideals of "culture" and German gymnastics lost much of its original meaning amongst the middle-classes and, in addition, those ideals had failed to spread amongst other classes.

Oddly, it was the introduction of certain forms of sports from England that gave the gymnasts a new mission. For them, German gymnastics became once more a symbol of cultural uniqueness (Krüger 1989). Mainly, what the gymnasts argued against was what they termed "English" sports on the basis of three lines of nationalistic argument. The gymnasts pointed out that "English" sports

- were obsessed with the competition between individuals or teams. In Tennis, Football, and other sports, the matter of winning or losing is of central importance. For the German gymnasts, competition was less important. It is true that GutMuths had already described games which could be seen as the forerunner of modern sprinting, but, for the gymnasts generally, the idea of records and individual glory was seen as a threat to pedagogical goals. In their view, gymnastics should strengthen the community and support harmony.
- were one-sided. For the gymnasts, sports seemed to have an unhealthy dimension in that the specialisation required for competitive success resembled English capitalism. "*Turnen*," on the other hand, is holistic in its approach. In this sense, German gymnastics fosters discipline, bodily aesthetics, and harmony between groups of gymnasts. Above all, the nationalist gymnasts accused English "sports" of being too commercial.
- were unlike German ideals since German "*Turnen*" is the expression of the "national character." The gymnasts followed Herder in believing in the objective and primordial quality of culture.

In reality, this criticism did not reflect the fact that in England itself, parts of the elites despised professionalism too. They did not see that for those English elites professionalism was something associated with the working and lower middle classes (Dunning and Sheard 1979). In English public schools, amateurism was seen as an ideal. In the same way, in France, Pierre de Coubertin (1863 to 1937) embraced amateurism as an ideal of sports (MacAloon 2001). He later made amateurism an ideal of the Olympic movement and it became a rule for the Olympic Games. Interestingly, in the beginning, Coubertin also supported the German idea to link sports, militarism, and nationalism with the goal of strengthening French youth after the defeat of 1870-71. Coubertin abandoned his original aims in favour of internationalism. However, the nationalist branch of the German "*Turner*" (who also did not like the Olympic movement) developed and propagated the oversimplifying scheme of "German" gymnastics versus "English" sports.

Unlike the bourgeois gymnasts, the German nobility adopted English sports very quickly. Even the Kaiser supported sports, that is, he gave money to German athletes in order that they would be able to travel to the first Olympic Games that took place in Athens in 1896. In their early days, the working-class associations tried to adopt bourgeois "*Turnen*" (Krüger 1989). However, this approach was not approved by the traditional German gymnasts. Some leading organisers of the gymnasts were strongly opposed to working class membership of gymnastic associations.

Such distinctive attitudes reflected the peculiarities of the German state-building process. A century before, the middle classes found themselves in an insecure position by being excluded from political decision-making. The notion of "culture" reflected this outsider-position as symbolic weapons against the nobility and the absolutist regime. At the end of the 19th century, broad sections of the middle classes were successful in shifting the balance of power in their favour. However, unlike in England or in the French Third Republic, the German bourgeoisie still was under the control of the nobility. This did not change until the end of World War I.

The German working-classes were fragmented. There was a radical Marxist and a moderate section. The latter consisted of workers associations, labour unions, and the majority of the Social Democratic Party influenced by Ferdinand Lassalle (an admirer of Fichte's "Addresses to the German Nation"). Yet, even these moderate Social Democrats did not find acceptance within the middle- and upper-classes. This rejection was demonstrated by the Anti-Socialist Laws (1878 to 1888). Social Democrats were called "*vaterlandslose Gesellen*" (companies, in the sense of social groups, lacking a fatherland); a derogatory and exclusionary term.

In this context, the idea of a "German nation" used by activists of the traditional gymnast-movement such as Ferdinand Goetz (1826-1915), who agitated against the emergence of working class gymnasts, was extremely exclusionary. Insiders mainly included just the members of their own class and their ideal was a bourgeois class-nation. Above all, it was also exclusionary towards Jews (and some non-German nationals) who were not allowed to become members of the gymnastic-associations. Thus, national we-images and class we-images were intermingled into a stereotypical and strong we-they-identity politics.

4. The Case Study, Part II: The Fall of Nationalistic German Gymnastics (1920s to 1980s)

When football and other sports became more popular, either new sports associations were founded, sports were institutionalized, or they were integrated into existing gymastics-associations. Not everyone in the gymnastics-movement agreed with the criticisms made by the nationalist gymnasts. Some tried to

develop a more reconciliatory attitude towards "English" sports. This moderate group argued that integrating gymnastics and the modern idea of "sports" should not be a problem. Apart from the increasing popularity of football, it was the success of the Olympic movement that changed the power-balance between sports and gymnastics. Among those who tried to integrate sports into the German gymnastics organisations was Carl Diem (1882 to 1962); he was the founder of sport clubs and the leader of the German Olympic team of 1912. He later served as the co-organiser of the Olympic Games of 1936 under the Nazi regime (Krüger 2009).

Although associated with nationalism, aspects of the experience of World War I turned out to work in favour of sports. Very pragmatically, football acquired a good reputation among the German General Staff as its popularity was seen as strengthening the morale of the soldiers in combat zones.

The popularity of football, tennis, and other sports indicates that class-distinction was beginning to be more porous than in earlier pre-war decades. The war itself was an important factor in changing the German class structure. Besides the war, modern economic conditions started to blur the classical lines of class divisions. New types of office-based employees such as clerks became common among the middle classes. In the context of these new working conditions, modern sports and other leisure activities gained a new importance (Elias and Dunning 2008). Above all, social structures changed because women became integrated more strongly than before into the official economy.

Photography, the technical reproduction of pictures and paintings, cinema films, the gramophone, and, after the War, the introduction of the radio changed access and the practice and consumption of art and "culture" in general. As Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Krakauer, and later Adorno and Horkheimer reflected, these new technical inventions strongly correlated with the ways in which "culture" was organised. These authors emphasised the new importance of the "cultural industry." In their Marxist point of view, the "cultural industry" helped to manipulate the masses. Apart from this critical approach, these writers focus on the fact that, indeed, the old bourgeois type of "culture" had been confronted with totally new types of cultural practices which could not easily be explained in terms of class culture. Beside the new popular culture, sports too transcended the old class boundaries and provided excitement and relaxation for a population living with restricting working conditions. Football tournaments and leagues developed into mass spectator events. A series of new stadiums was erected. In Austria, the first professional football league on the continent was established. The commercialism of such a league totally broke with the ideals of the gymnasts. This professional league also convinced many young working class people to play football or to watch the game. Not only the gymnasts but also socialists and working-class sport associations disliked the development of professionalism in football.

At the same time, German gymnasts felt they were losing the struggle. This fact animated them to strengthen their identity politics and their utopian variation of nationalism all the more. In 1923/24, they brought about the "clean break" ("*reinliche Scheidung*") between football and other sports on the one hand, and gymnastics on the other. It was only the subsequent Nazi policy of "*Gleichschaltung*" (a totalitarian control and coordination of organisations) that ended this split by bringing both the gymnasts and the sports associations under the control of the "National Socialist League of the Reich for Physical Exercise" (Nationalsozialistischer Reichsbund für Leibesübungen; Grüne 2003).

In the Germany and Austria of the 1920s and 1930s, there was also a proletarian counter movement against "bourgeois sports." It was organised by the working-class sport movements (*Arbeitersport*). These movements heavily criticised the professional football league in Austria and the Olympic movement as "bourgeois" forms of sports. For them, sports were either too capitalistic or too nationalistic. "Bourgeois" sports were seen as an ideological instrument of capitalism seeking to sidetrack the workers from the class-struggle. There was a series of International Worker's Olympiads organised by the Socialist Worker's Sport International that was especially important in Germany and Austria. Their idea was not to organise competitions between nations but competitions involving other types of teams.

Despite these efforts, professional football was very popular amongst the working classes. In the Vienna of the 1920s and 1930s, many football stars came from the working class and were supported by them, although there was a tension between them and the socialist party. The same was true for the national football-teams that began to become popular in Germany and Austria in the 1920s. The split between the socialist sport organisations and the other sport associations also ended with the ascendancy of the totalitarian politics of the Nazi regime (Krammer 1981; Dierker 1990; Gounot 2002).

A multitude of political confrontations and conflicts made the nation-sports-and-culture-issue a hot topic in politics, even to a kind of "moral panic." It is important to see that it was not single, unrelated individuals but organised groups which reflected culture. In the case of the gymnasts, it was the influence of a foreign "culture" that stimulated their discourses. Preserving and defending the own "culture" gave them legitimacy. The working class-sport movement agitated against "capitalism" and the "bourgeois" aestheticism and idealisation of the "nation" by the Olympic movement. These two types of criticism of sports gained significance because, in a way, they reflected the tight social tensions and class-conflicts of the period. On the one hand, the old elites did not give up their traditional power positions. On the other hand, some working class-representatives pursued a socialist revolution from below.

The beginning of the decline of the nationalistic gymnasts and the adoption of sports as a "world culture" did not lead to the idea that the nation is something unnecessary. Quite the opposite is true. Because the gymnasts did not

want to compete in the Olympic Games or in other competitions, ironically, it was they who failed to understand a certain necessity related to modern nationalism. People living in existing nation states were also living in a world consisting of other nation states. They were not the only ones who possessed this type of state. They were living in a geopolitical environment involving national rivalry. In such a world, national prestige is not only linked to ideas about uniqueness. In such a world, prestige depends on international reputation. This means respect and national glory depend to a large extent on the opinion and evaluation of others. The Olympic movement and other sport organisations which started to organise themselves internationally in various forms of tournament understood those needs much better. For such national sports to become important, no national movements were needed at all. National sports like the Football World Cup became important because they were self-evidently of value for many people. Above all, national we-feelings in sports served the need of the sport organisations, the athletes, the audience, and the mass-media as well as the governments of nation-states.

In relation to the process of sportification, national we-images and we-ideals have become culturally "emptied." The process of "emptying" cultural issues from sports lasted more than one generation. It was about forgetting hot debates and "moral panic" of the past. This process of "emptying" is linked to "functional democratization," which was partly blocked in the period between the wars but which was open enough to allow new forms of mass-media communicated popular culture to emerge and to replace the old bourgeois ideals of "culture."

A popular song from one of the first Austrian music stars of the new radio era, Hermann Leopoldi, makes the cultural transformation from bourgeois high culture to popular culture its topic. The song from 1922 "Heute spielt der Uridil" (Today Uridil plays) describes the popularity of Josef Uridil (1895 to 1962) as the first Austrian football star (Rapid and Vienna, and from 1919 to 1926 player of the Austrian national team). The song also compared the excitement of a football match to the atmosphere of old-fashioned bourgeois culture.

Anyone watching a football match

No longer cares for anything else in Europe.

It's true, you can go to the opera.

However, what does opera mean today?

Its heyday is over.

Parsifal is lost

Instead everybody likes to see a clean goal

[…]

Don't give a damn about Selma Kurz [an Opera Singer].

This indicated a further characteristic of nation sports: winning and losing in sport competitions started to become a matter of politics. The mass-media coverage of sport-games fostered a new type of public for whom success in sports becomes related to national reputation. "Empty nationalism" in sports was not of great importance in the decades before World War I, nor did it have importance in the 19th century. This type of nationalism bound to international prestige started to gain importance in the 1920s and 1930s.

Suddenly, there were IOC boycotts! Germany was not allowed to participate in the Games in Antwerp (1920) and Paris (1924). In 1928, German athletes were very successful. Only Americans won more medals than the Germans. Winning gold metals became widely acknowledged as a source of prestige. The FIFA World Cup of 1934 restored the reputation of the loser-countries of World War I. Austria won fourth place, Germany third, and Fascist Italy won the competition. In the 1938 World Cup, the Germans (now united with Austrian players) disappointed the German public and the Nazi regime: proof of how important international reputation on the base of sports had already become.

The growing of such an international figuration of prestige and distribution of status in relation to modern sports also effected traditional figurations of prestige within German society. For many members of the middle-classes, the old-style isolationist nationalism of the gymnasts became less attractive. The link between the idea of the nation and the mass-media coverage of sports suddenly provided far more resources for glory and national honour than the stiff "*Turnen.*" It was these new contests between singe athletes or teams perceived as sporting "duels" between nations which became the focus of public attention.

German athletes were also involved in those sporting duels during the 1920s and 1930s. To give one example, in 1936 there was a "duel" between Austrian and German mountaineers to be the first to climb the North Face of the Eiger. A more geopolitical goal was associated with the 1937 expedition to the Nanga Parbat glorified in the 1938 documentary/propaganda film *Kampf um den Himalaya* (Struggle over the Himalayas). One year later, a second expedition to the Nanga Parbat was sent out which included celebrated mountaineers Peter Aufschnaiter and Heinrich Harrer. Equally, the boxing matches between Joe Louis and Max Schmeling were seen as a duel between nations and political systems.

There were disputes within the Nazi party about the meaning of the 1936 Olympic Games for Nazism (Krüger 1972; Alkemeyer 1996; Gebauer and Wulf 1996; Large 2007). One group followed strictly the nationalistic idea of the "*Turner.*" They rejected the plan to organise the games. The leading circles of the party, however, realised that the Olympic Games provided opportunities which could suit a political purpose. They saw that the Olympic Games might be used as a means of deception. Germany could show the world an open-minded and peaceful face, whereas in reality the country was preparing for war.

This politics of deception could only work by realising very pragmatically that amongst the broad population athletics, football and other types of sports were not seen as something foreign anymore. Also, the Nazis saw very clearly that football distracted people from the suffering of the war. They guaranteed the continuation of the football league even during the war.

The decades after 1945 were the heyday of stable nation states in Western Europe. Austria regained independence and developed a non-German type of national we-image. During the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, skiing and winter sports in general were an important source for developing an Austrian nationalism (Horak 2003). In both East and West Germany, modern national sports became an important source of national pride, too. In Germany, the football team and other national sport teams provided the opportunity to regain the status of a "normal" nation. The two most symbolic events were probably the "*Wunder von Bern*" (Miracle of Bern) in the 1954 World Cup and the World Cup of 2006 (known as "*Sommermärchen*," Summer Fairy Tale) that reassured the re-united Germans that they were no longer the villains of history but a member of the international community. Even before that, the East-German government had started to regard success in sports as a symbol of the success of the communist system. In this sense, for the GDR, Gold medals were important in their competition against West-Germany. They became even more important as it was clear that the states of the eastern bloc be unlikely to surpass the West in terms of economy, technology, and wealth (for a detailed discussion about relationships between international prestige and sporting success, see Haut et al. [2017]).

In the Cold-War era, in both parts of Germany as well as in Austria, neither the "Turner" nor any other alternative sport-system rivalled modern national sports. The principles of modern sports became legitimate in the eyes of most sections of the population. This acceptance of modern sports also went hand in hand with enormous economic growth and with the fading of class-conflicts in the decades between the 1950s and 1980s. At least in the West there was the development of a "middle class society" and of the "bourgeoisiefication" (*Verbürgerlichung*) of the working classes. In the 1980s, Beck (1986, 121ff.) introduced the model of the "*Fahrstuhleffekt*" (elevator effect). It suggested that even though differences in income between classes were not shrinking, more people than ever enjoyed welfare, higher education, and mass consumption because of the general increase in material wealth. Leisure activities also became important and accessible for members of lower classes. Sports like tennis, golf, and other former upper class types of games became open to participation by people from lower social ranks.

5. Summary and Discussion- "Empty" Nationalism and its Consequences for Research

The case of the German gymnast movement indicates some patterns relating identity and habitus to each other. In the 19th and early 20th century, "culture" had become a powerful symbol. It supported social distance between the German bourgeoisie and the lower classes. Above all, the symbol of "culture" was also a symptom of the incomplete nature of nation- and state-formation process in Germany. The German and the middle classes – as the bearers of the ideas of the nation and of "culture" – were not able to integrate other social classes into their national we-image. Their ideals became incorporated into an utopian vision of the nation. This vision more or less excluded aristocrats and members of the working-classes. The structure of the ideals of nationalistic gymnastic organisations followed mainly the logic of us-them-relationships regarding other social classes. "We" mainly included only members of the middle-classes. Members of other classes were considered to be "them" and not "us," or even "you" (plural). Above all, this logic of "us" and "them" was also considered as a basis for relations towards members of other nations. As the ideals of the gymnastic movement indicate, members of other nations were not considered as equals and as being worthy enough to compete with the Germans. Thus, the term national "culture" included a double meaning of us-them-relationships: towards other classes and towards other nations. Therefore, the nationalism of the German gymnastic-movement represented very clearly a type of class-nation.

After 1945, the German defeat, the rise of the lower-classes and more opportunities for social mobility made new models of nationalism more attractive. "Empty" nationalism and national sports were seen as such kinds of models. Organised nationalism became a marginal phenomenon in Germany. The nationalist propaganda of the "Turner" associations faded away in these decades. Many people even forgot the meanings related to the term "culture" which had been well known in the debates before World War II. For them, the terms "*Sport*" and "*Turnen*" became synonymous. Newer generations, born after the Second World War, hardly knew about the old debates at all. A distinction between sports and German gymnastics no longer made sense to them. As the notion of nationalistic "*Turnen*" faded, nation sports had begun to rise. Indeed, for the wide public, games, body-culture, and all kinds of sports activities no longer stood as symbols of a distinct primordial German "culture." However, national we-feelings and we-images have not waned. They simply became transformed from political dogmas and images of national identity politics into more diffused and unreflective forms. The culturally "filled" nationalism turned into "empty" nationalism.

At least since the financial crisis of 2007-08, this golden age of "empty" nationalism and national sport is over. Recent years have indicated a return of nationalist "culture" to public debates. This is true also in the context of sport. Most of these new debates about "culture" are based on issues around immigration. In both Austria and Germany (as well as in other Western European countries) a series of discussions took place which focused on the role of athletes of different ethnic origins as representatives of the nation. To what extent is cultural emptiness acceptable? Can migrants or the children of migrants properly represent the nation as athletes or players in Olympic Games or the World Cup?

It seems that, once more, these questions are related to a substantial shift in the class-structure. Perhaps as a result of the financial and economic turmoil, social closure has become an important issue in political debate. Unlike the situation in the times of Jahn and Fichte, people who are not actually middle-class but have less education and, perhaps, less life-chances have picked up the idea of a culturally distinct nation. For them, this idea has become a symbol of solidarity. In contrast, a new cosmopolitan class who are highly educated city dwellers (often referred to by their critics as "elite") tend to disdain the ideas of national solidarity and distinctive "cultures." In such a context, once habitualised national we-images have once more come into discursive consciousness. They have become the subject of "moral panic," discussions, and identity politics.

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